

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on June 18, 2009 along with the enclosed Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS). Claims 1 to 54 have been cancelled. Claims 55 to 90 have been added. No new matter has been added by the new claims. A Petition for a Two-Month Extension of Time is submitted along with the Response and Supplemental IDS. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for any fees due in connection with the Petition, the Response, and the Supplemental IDS.

The Office Action rejected Claims 18 to 26, 28 to 36, 38 to 41 and 44 to 52 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,027,115 (Griswold et al.; "Griswold"). Additionally, the Office Action rejected Claims 27, 37, 42, 43, 53 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Griswold as applied to at least claim 18 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,452,276 (Loose et al.; "Loose").

Applicant respectfully disagrees with and traverses these rejections. Nonetheless, Applicant respectfully submits that these rejections are rendered moot in view of the cancellation of Claims 18 to 54.

Applicant has added new independent Claim 55 (along with respective dependent Claims 56 to 72) and new independent Claim 73 (along with respective dependent Claims 74 to 90) to advance the prosecution of this application. Support for new Claims 55 to 90 can be found at least in paragraphs [0015], [0024], [0026], [0033], and [0055] to [0059] along with Figs. 3 to 5 of Applicant's specification.

Griswold does not anticipate or render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 55. Griswold discloses a gaming device having a plurality of reels and a plurality of reel strips. Each reel strip includes electroluminescent elements which define one or more reel symbols. The electronic reel strips include inked images of the symbols in addition to the electroluminescent elements. The electroluminescent elements and the inked images enable the reel symbols to be displayed in multiple formats (Abstract).

In a first embodiment, the gaming device of Griswold includes reel symbols which appear to rotate with the reels. Specifically, Griswold discloses:

[i]n one aspect, the present invention provides a reel for a slot machine. The reel may be characterized as including the following elements: (a) an internal reel portion rotatable about an axis and having an outer circumferential region and (b) a reel strip mounted on the outer circumferential region. The reel strip includes (i) a plurality of symbol regions for displaying symbols to a player of the slot machine and (ii) one or more light elements in one or more of the symbol regions, which light elements can be illuminated independently of one another. Preferably, the one or more light elements are electroluminescent elements (col. 2, line 60 to col. 3, line 3).

The first embodiment of Griswold appears to employ light elements (e.g., electroluminescent elements) on the symbol regions of the reel strips instead of illuminating the symbols with an illumination device. Moreover, Griswold discloses that “[b]y employing light elements on the symbol display regions of the reel strips, it may no longer be necessary to provide lighting with the reels” (col. 2, lines 42 to 48).

Unlike new independent Claim 55, the first embodiment of Griswold does not anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member.

In a second embodiment, the gaming device of Griswold includes reel symbols which appear to be selectively back lighted (see Figures 6A and 6B of Griswold which are reproduced below). Regarding such back lighting, Griswold discloses:

[a]nother illuminated reel design is illustrated in FIGS. 6A-6B. This embodiment employs selectively back lighted reel symbols. The system utilizes a stepper motor reel assembly which may be similar to those utilized in conventional slot machines such as the IGT S-Plus product (available from International Game Technology of Reno, Nev.). In one specific embodiment, the physical reel strips have 22 stops, i.e., places where the reel is stopped after spinning. Eleven of the spaces (every other space) on the reel strip is a blank. Ten of the remaining 11 spaces on the reel strip are printed with compound symbols. The remaining symbol is a Jackpot symbol unique to the personality of the game. Other reel

and symbol arrangements are of course possible. Importantly, compound symbols are printed on the reel strip in such a manner as to be transparent and they are also covered by a translucent covering layer. These compound symbols are not visible until lighted from behind. As illustrated in FIG. 6A, examples of a compound reel strip assembly 603 symbol might be a single bar 605, a double bar 607, and a triple bar 609. The symbol is actually printed as a triple bar symbol. However, by selectively back lighting each of the components of the triple bar symbol, it can be presented as a single, double or triple bar. Many other combinations of compound symbols are possible (col. 8, line 58 to col. 9, line 14) (emphasis added).

* * *

FIG. 6B illustrates one mechanism suitable for implementing a compound reel strip such as that depicted in FIG. 6A. As shown in FIG. 6B, inside the reel assembly 603 and immediately behind a viewing area corresponding to the pay line(s) is a light diffuser assembly 615. There is one light diffuser assembly per reel and it consists of terminations of a multiplicity of fiber optic bundles 613 which couple the diffuser 615 to a light source 611. The light source 611 is an array of multiple colored light elements 617 such as LEDs, incandescent lamps or other sources of high intensity light. These light source elements 617 are driven by the game processor (not shown) which controls the game outcome. The light source elements 617, the fiber optic bundles 613 and the diffuser assembly 615 are constructed in such a manner as to allow selective illumination of reel symbol elements. Thus, using the above example of a compound single, double or triple bar symbol, it would be possible to illuminate the component symbols of the compound symbol in selected colors, e.g., a red single bar, a blue triple bar a green double bar, etc. In one example, the Jackpot symbol is not a compound symbol, but it could, nevertheless, be selectively illuminated in various colors by selecting the appropriate light source elements (col. 9, lines 15 to 37) (emphasis added).

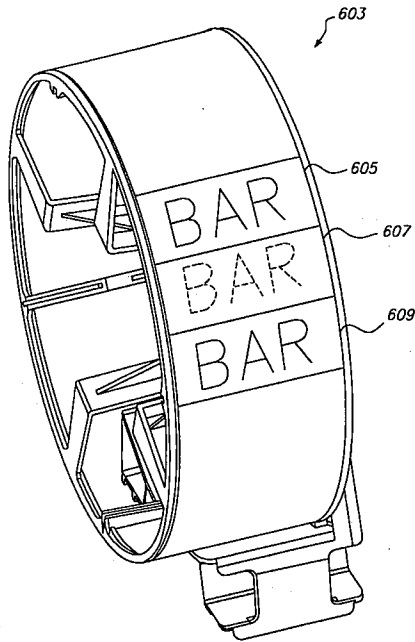


FIG. 6A

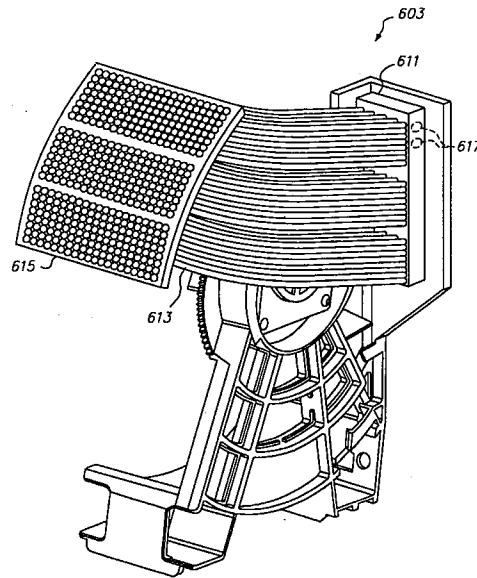
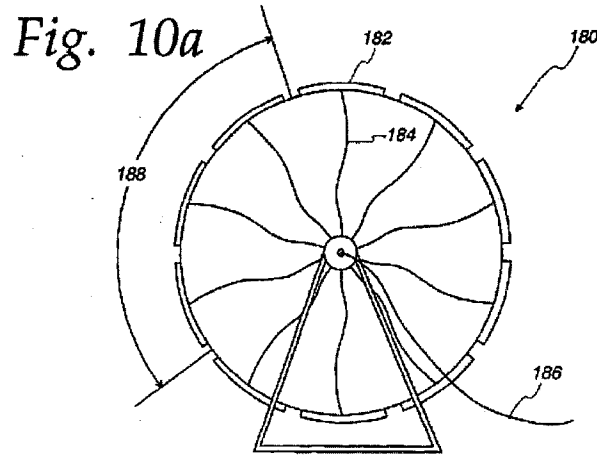


FIG. 6B

The second embodiment of Griswold appears to employ a light source (e.g., light source 611 in Figure 6B) in combination with selectively back lighted reel symbols (e.g., triple bar 609 in Figure 6A) printed or inked on the reel strip. However, unlike new independent Claim 55, the second embodiment of Griswold does not anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member.

The Office Action relied on a first embodiment of Loose to disclose "the utilization of LCD and organic displays on the reel strips to provide the advantages of video display while preserving the look and feel [of] traditional reel type displays (Loose Col. 7:26-40 Figure 10)." Figure 10a of Loose (which is reproduced below) illustrates the first embodiment of Loose, which includes a mechanical reel having a video display at each symbol location.



Specifically, regarding Figure 10a, Loose discloses:

FIG. 10a illustrates yet another alternative in which the system 180 includes a reel having a plurality of video displays 182 at each symbol location. Each video display 182 is capable of displaying various video symbols, which provides the system 180 with the flexibility of a true video slot machine, while preserving the movement of mechanical reels that numerous slot machine players find desirable. The signal for producing the video symbols is transmitted to each video display 182 by a wire 184. A primary power cable 186 feeds the signals into the reel where the signals are distributed to the wires 184 (see FIG. 10b). The video displays 182 can be a liquid crystal display (LCD), dot matrix, vacuum fluorescence display, organic liquid crystal display (OLCD), LED array, Electronic paper, or any other display device capable of producing images (col. 7, lines 26 to 40).

Unlike new independent Claim 55, the first embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member. Even if the video displays of Loose could be combined with the reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 55.

Loose discloses a second embodiment in which a video display provides symbol images and backlighting for a reel (see Figure 4 of Loose reproduced below).

Regarding Figure 4, Loose discloses:

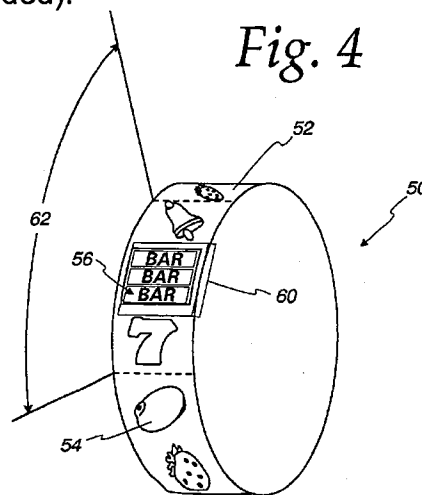
FIG. 4 illustrates a mechanical reel 50 having an outer surface 52 with a plurality of symbols 54. In one of the symbol locations, a transparent window 56 is located on the outer surface 52. A video display 60 is located at a fixed position behind the mechanical reel 50 for displaying a video symbol through the transparent window 56. In the embodiment of FIG. 4, the video display 60 is slightly larger than the size of the window 56 and is located as close to the window 56 as possible. The transparent window 56 preferably is clear polymeric window, but can be glass, as well (col. 4, line 63 to col. 5, line 5) (emphasis added).

* * *

The video display 60 may be located at the general position where traditional reel backlighting would be located. The video display 60 can be a CRT display, liquid crystal display (LCD), dot matrix, vacuum fluorescence display, organic liquid crystal display (OLCD), LED array, Electronic paper, or any other display device capable of producing images (col. 5, lines 35 to 40) (emphasis added).

* * *

Further, one larger video display 60 could provide the video symbols and backlighting for several reels. For example, the video display 60 may have three distinct sections, one for each reel in a three-reel slot machine, that provide backlighting or video symbols (col. 5, lines 41 to 45) (emphasis added).



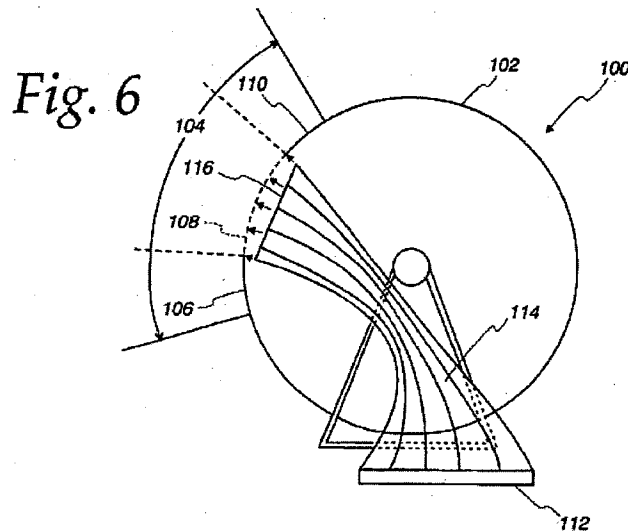
Unlike independent Claim 55, the second embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member. Even if the video display of Loose could be combined with the reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 55.

Loose discloses a third embodiment in which a mechanical reel having a plurality of symbols operates with a fiber optic bundle (see Figure 6 of Loose reproduced below). Regarding Figure 6, Loose discloses:

FIG. 6 depicts a system 100 having a mechanical reel 102 with a display region 104. The display region 104 is of a width allowing for viewing of three symbols in a first symbol region 106, a second symbol region 108, and a third symbol region 110. In FIG. 6, the first symbol region 106 and the third symbol region 110 have normal symbols displayed thereon. On the other hand, the second symbol region 108 has a transparent window (dashed lines) (col. 6, lines 7 to 14).

* * *

A display device 112 develops images that are transmitted through a plurality of optical fibers 114 (e.g., a light pipe). The optical fibers 114 have an end region 116 that projects the image through the transparent window in the second window region. While shown as flat, the end region 116 may be rounded, preferably at a radius that approximates the radius of the mechanical reel 102. The display device 112 can be located outside the reel 102 (i.e., outside the cylindrical volume defined by the reel) and the optical fibers can extend into the reel 102 so as to produce the image in the transparent window. Also, the display device 112 and optical fibers 114 can serve to provide images and backlighting for several reels 102 (col. 6, lines 15 to 27) (emphasis added).



Unlike new independent Claim 55, the third embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member. Even if the fiber optic bundle of Loose could be combined with the reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 55.

Loose discloses a fourth embodiment in which a light source backlights compound symbols on a reel (see Figures 12a and 12b of Loose reproduced below). Regarding Figures 12a and 12b, Loose discloses:

FIGS. 12a and 12b illustrate a reel 250 that can be used by itself or in conjunction with the embodiments of FIGS. 4-8. The reel 250 has a symbol location 252 which provides a compound symbol, which is a symbol that is capable of being visualized as more than one symbol. For the purposes of describing this feature of the present invention, the compound symbol is of the "bar symbol" genre. As an example, when the wavelength of light is 700 nanometers from a light source 254 (FIG. 12a), the bottom two bars 252a, 252b in the bar symbol are visible to the player, making the compound symbol appear like a double bar symbol. In this instance, the top bar 252a is not responsive to the light at 700 nanometers, such that it is not visible. Alternatively, when the wavelength is 400 nanometers (FIG. 12b), the top bar 252a appears visible to the player, while

the bottom two bars 252b, 252c are not responsive. Thus, the overall appearance is a single bar symbol when 400 nanometer light is used (col. 8, lines 15 to 31) (emphasis added).

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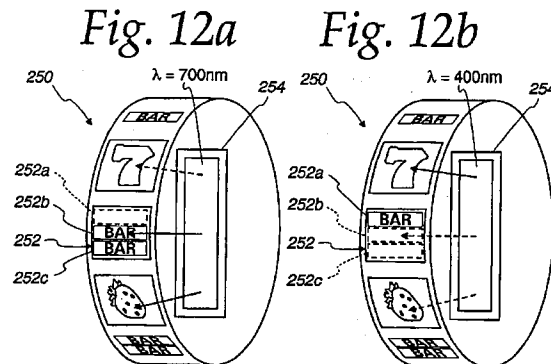
The source 254 can be any kind of display device capable of providing various output wavelengths. In one preferred embodiment, the source 254 is an array of multi-colored LEDs. While colored bulbs may work, the LEDs are preferred since the bulbs get hot and burn out due to cycling, and white bulbs become yellow over time. In these situations, the LED is used for backlighting when non-compound symbols require such backlighting and for selective wavelength lighting when one or more features of a compound symbol require visualization. The source 254 can also be an electroluminescent element (col. 8, lines 32 to 42) (emphasis added).

* * *

Further, the reel can include compound symbols at some locations and transparent windows in other locations to provide varying degrees of versatility. For such a system, the source 254 must also be able to provide video symbols for display through the transparent window (col. 8, lines 43 to 47) (emphasis added).

* * *

The invention described in FIG. 12 contemplates using various wavelengths of energy to achieve the display of more than one symbol in one symbol location on the reel 250. For example, ultra-violet energy may be projected to cause the fluorescing of certain colored reel symbols so as to make them more visible, or a black light can be used to highlight certain symbol features in a compound symbol (col. 8, lines 48 to 55) (emphasis added).



Unlike new independent Claim 55, the fourth embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first illumination device supported by a first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (ii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iii) a first electronic symbol display device supported by the first rotatable member. Even if the light source of Loose could be combined with the reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 55.

At least for the above reasons, the gaming device of new independent Claim 55 is patentably distinguished over Griswold and the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose. Accordingly, the gaming device of new independent Claim 55 is in condition for allowance.

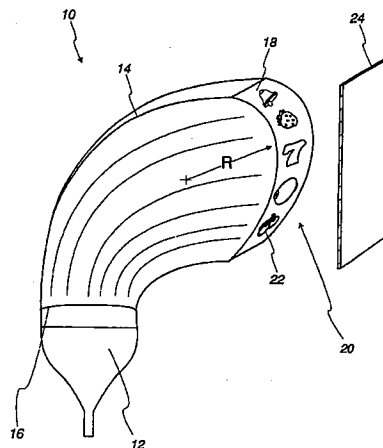
New dependent Claims 56 to 72 depend directly from new independent Claim 55 and are also allowable for the reasons given with respect to new independent Claim 55 and because of the additional features recited in these claims.

Additionally, Griswold does not anticipate or render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 73. Unlike new independent Claim 73, Griswold does not anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first frame supported by the housing, (ii) a first illumination device supported by the first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (iii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iv) a first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device supported by the first frame, wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device includes a first curved display surface that defines a plurality of different symbol positions, and wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device is stationary relative to the first frame and positioned between the first rotatable member and the first illumination device.

Loose does not remedy Griswold regarding the gaming device of new independent Claim 73. A fifth embodiment of Loose (see Figure 2 of Loose reproduced below) discloses an image display device (e.g., an organic light-emitting diode) that provides output to a fiber optic bundle (col. 4, lines 4 to 10 of Loose). The fiber optic bundle includes one end which is located on "a curved plane having a radius R that

approximates the curvature of a typical mechanical reel" (col. 4, lines 18 to 20 of Loose).

Fig. 2

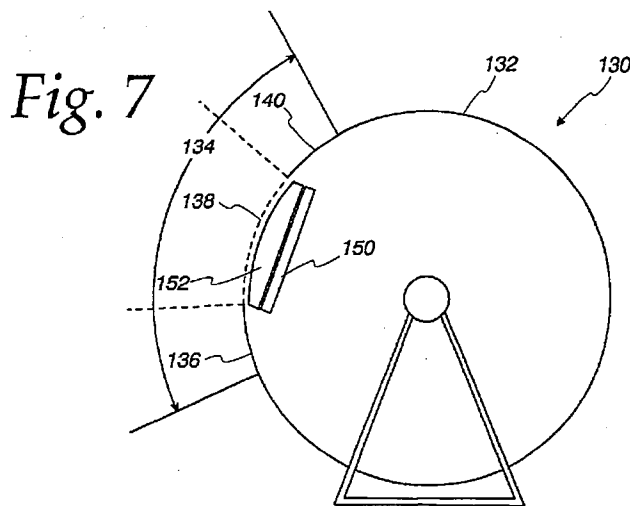


Unlike new independent Claim 73, the fifth embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first frame supported by the housing, (ii) a first illumination device supported by the first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (iii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iv) a first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device supported by the first frame, wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device includes a first curved display surface that defines a plurality of different symbol positions, and wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device is stationary relative to the first frame and positioned between the first rotatable member and the first illumination device. Even if the display device of Loose (shown in Figure 2) could be combined with the reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 73.

Loose discloses a sixth embodiment in which a mechanical reel system includes a display device and a lens located in front of the display device (see Figure 7 of Loose reproduced below). Regarding Figure 7, Loose discloses:

FIG. 7 illustrates a mechanical reel system 130 having a reel 132 with a display region 134 that includes a first symbol region 136, a second symbol region 138, and a third symbol region 140. The display device 150 is positioned in the

middle of the display region 134 to provide images to a transparent window in the reel 132 or backlighting for typical reel symbols. A lens 152 is located in front of the display device 150 to provide curvature to the video symbol and cause it to more resemble the symbol on the reel 152. While the lens 152 is shown as being used with a display device 150, the lens 152 may also be placed on the ends of a fiber optic bundle, such as the one shown in FIG. 6. Also, it should be noted that any of the video displays previously described could have a curved surface mimicking the curvature of the mechanical reel (col. 6, lines 28 to 41) (emphasis added).



Unlike new independent Claim 73, the sixth embodiment of Loose does not appear to anticipate or render obvious a gaming device which includes, among other elements: (i) a first frame supported by the housing, (ii) a first illumination device supported by the first frame, wherein the first illumination device is stationary relative to the first frame, (iii) a first rotatable member supported by the first frame, and (iv) a first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device supported by the first frame, wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device includes a first curved display surface that defines a plurality of different symbol positions, and wherein the first organic light-emitting diode symbol display device is stationary relative to the first frame and positioned between the first rotatable member and the first illumination device. Even if the display device of Loose (shown in Figure 7) could be combined with the

reels of Griswold, the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose does not render obvious the gaming device of new independent Claim 73.

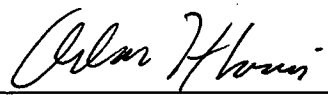
At least for the above reasons, the gaming device of new independent Claim 73 is patentably distinguished over Griswold and the proposed combination of Griswold and Loose. Accordingly, the gaming device of new independent Claim 73 is in condition for allowance.

New dependent Claims 74 to 90 depend directly from new independent Claim 73 and are also allowable for the reasons given with respect to new independent Claim 73 and because of the additional features recited in these claims.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 27, 2009